

Point Module X—Conservation Practices

The conservation practices for which data are to be collected for the 1997 NRI include only those practices that can be determined remotely and that have been determined most important to states. Conservation practice data collected in earlier inventories are not part of the 1997 NRI. There are 22 practices being considered for the 1997 NRI, several of which were not included in previous NRIs.

Definition

Conservation Practice. A specific treatment used to meet a specific need in planning and carrying out soil and water conservation programs, and for which standards and applications have been developed.

Importance

The collection of conservation practice information in each NRI provides the ability to determine changes in conservation systems by the gains and losses of practices. Accuracy in inventory of practice data provides information on historical accomplishments, longevity of accomplishment, and indication of work still to be done.

Guidelines and Clarifications

Determine the conservation practices applied in the area in which the point falls or the part of the field surrounding the point that would be considered in conservation planning. The point need not fall directly on the specific practice. The area of consideration for determining a conservation practice may extend beyond the PSU boundary, but must be within the field or treatment unit where the sample point falls. Application of conservation practices is determined when land cover/use is classified as cropland, pastureland, or CRP land for 1997.

A conservation practice must meet the national standard definition and be maintained and functioning according to the intended purpose.

Examine the photography and other ancillary material for the PSU area and determine if any of the following conservation practices are associated with the field in which the point falls. If multiple points occur within the same field, conservation practice information must be entered for each point.

Documentation Required in PSU Folder

Maintain source photography and copies of ancillary materials used.

Categories and Codes

Code	Conservation Practices
330	Contour Farming
331	Contour Orchard and Other Fruit Areas
589B	Cross Wind Stripcropping
589C	Cross Wind Trap Strips
362	Diversion
386	Field Border
393	Filter Strip
412	Grassed Waterways or Outlets
422A	Herbaceous Wind Barriers
423	Hillside Ditch
447	Irrigation System, Tailwater Recovery
468	Lined Waterway or Outlet
378	Pond
585	Stripcropping, Contour
586	Stripcropping, Field
607	Surface Drainage, Field Ditch
608	Surface Drainage, Main or Lateral
600	Terrace
638	Water and Sediment Control Basin
380	Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment
363	Divided Slopes (for Pacific Northwest only)
45	Cross Slope Farming (for Pacific Northwest only)

PDA Instructions

Point Module X is available only if land cover/use is cropland, pastureland, or CRP land (Point Module III).

From the choice list in the PDA, select all conservation practices that apply.

Upon completion, or if no practices occur in the area in which the point falls, tap the check box to verify data entry. Resolve any reported edit checks.

Example

A point falls in a cropland field between terraces. Farming operations follow the contour of the terraces. The terraces drain into a grassed waterway. In this example, the following conservation practices would be chosen from the PDA choice list:

- code 330 Contour Farming
- code 412 Grassed Waterways or Outlets
- code 600 Terraces

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Conservation practices? Note

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Point Module X Glossary

(The following definitions were extracted from the 1997 National Resources Inventory glossary.)

Contour Farming. Farming sloping land in such a way that preparing land, planting, and cultivating are done on the contours. (This includes following established grades of terraces or diversion.) [NHCP]

Contour Orchard and Other Fruit Area. Planting orchards, vineyards, or small fruits so that all cultural operations are done on the contour. [NHCP]

Cross Wind Stripcropping. Growing crops in strips established across the prevailing wind erosion direction, and arranged so that strips susceptible to wind erosion are alternated with strips having a protective cover that is resistant to wind erosion. [NHCP]

Cross Wind Trap Strips. Herbaceous cover resistant to wind erosion, established in one or more strips across the prevailing wind erosion direction. [NHCP]

Diversion. A channel constructed across the slope with a supporting ridge on the lower side. [NHCP]

Field Border. A strip of perennial vegetation established at the edge of a field by planting or by converting it from trees to herbaceous vegetation or shrubs. [NHCP]

Filter Strip. A strip or area of vegetation for removing sediment, organic matter, and other pollutants from runoff and waste water. [NHCP]

Grassed Waterway. A natural or constructed channel that is shaped or graded to required dimensions and established in suitable vegetation for the stable conveyance of runoff. [NHCP]

Herbaceous Wind Barriers. Herbaceous vegetation established in rows or narrow strips across the prevailing wind direction. [NHCP]

Hillside Ditch. A channel that has a supporting ridge on the lower side constructed across the slope at definite vertical intervals and gradient, with or without a vegetative barrier. [NHCP]

Irrigation System, Tailwater Recovery. A facility to collect, store, and transport irrigation tailwater for reuse in a farm irrigation distribution system. [NHCP]

Lined Waterway or Outlet. A waterway or outlet having an erosion-resistant lining of concrete, stone, or other permanent material. The lined section extends up the side slopes to a designed depth. The earth above the permanent lining may be vegetated or otherwise protected. [NHCP]

Pond. A water impoundment made by constructing a dam or an embankment or by excavating a pit or dugout. [NHCP]

Stripcropping, Contour. Growing crops in a systematic arrangement of strips or bands on the contour to reduce water erosion. The crops are arranged so that a strip of grass or close-growing crop is alternated with a strip of clean-tilled crop or fallow or a strip of grass is alternated with a close-growing crop. [NHCP]

Stripcropping, Field. Growing crops in a systematic arrangement of strips or bands across the